

Fallston Community Council Meeting Notes

March 22, 2011

Attendees: Dave Williams, George Twigg, Jim Riley, Joyce Eaton, Don McCreesh, Morita Bruce

Guests (and organization represented): Joe Woods (County Council District B), Captain Keith Warner and DFC Jody Nickoles (HC Sheriffs Office), Roman Ratych (Grater Fallston Association), Jim Chrismer (HPC), Beth Paggioli

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Dave Williams.. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved. The following meetings were announced: Next FCC meeting is May 24, 2011. Planning & Zoning's second Master Plan open house is April 7, 6:30 at HCC. Maryland's PlanMaryland open house will be April 13, 5:00 at HCC.

Sheriff's Office

DFC Jody Nickoles provided Community Policing statistics. The increase in calls for service are due to new arrangements between the Sheriff's Office and State Police. She reminded everyone to keep car doors locked and garages closed. Thefts are increasing. BG&E representatives and others were warned that copper thefts on construction sites is increasing. Captain Keith Warner was introduced (warnerk@harfordsheriff.org, 410-692-7880).

Fallston Oral History Project

Jim Chismer and Carol Deibel of the Historic Preservation Commission discussed the Commission's work to preserve the county's heritage, built and unbuilt. Both the old Proctor House and the old school building on Gordon St. in Bel Air have been renovated and are in use. They are interviewing people to capture Fallston's history in the 20th century, and mentioned the Curtis Institute (a famous school at Routes 152 and 147), and waves of immigration in the 1930's and 1970's from N. Carolina and Baltimore, respectively. Residents willing to share information were urged to call Sarah Corey, Historic Preservation Planner at P&Z (410-638-3103 x1309 or 410-879-2000 x3103).

Dr. Ratych said a GFA committee is also looking at Fallston history, and Beth Paggioli will put the information and interview into a booklet. Harford lacks historical plaques and signs.

Jim Chrismer mentioned Acadia Press for free photos of community history.

BG&E Infrastructure/Reliability Projects

Bonnie Johansen (410-269-5282), Albert Alford and Mark Fay gave a presentation on BG&E's ongoing and future work in Harford to improve the the reliability and capacity of the transmission infrastructure (transmission towers, poles, lines, transformers, etc). A new master substation is going in behind the Rte. 152 park-and-ride. Upgrading or replacement of old poles is underway. New, taller, high tension towers ("transmission lattice towers") are being installed in the right-of-way from Baltimore County through Harford to Grayson substation and on into Pennsylvania. After all the new towers are installed, the power lines will be transferred from the current towers, which will then be removed. Completion date is June 2014.

Jim Riley asked about the Jones Subaru lighting issue. Ms. Johansen said she has talked both with Jones and Councilman Woods. BG&E did the design to the lighting specifications and assuming the original trees and buffer would remain (between the car dealership and the homes behind it). Jones subsequently took down trees, put the lights closer to the residences than originally planned, and installed lighting that exceeded what BG&E's design called for.

Councilman Woods said Jones admits they have a problem and will work on it. P&Z has cited a nuisance rule on the lighting.

Old Business

Joppa/Joppatowne and Edgewood Community Councils are interested in a joint meeting (once) for District B. Councilman Woods asked if FCC would be interested and all agreed.

Dave Williams noted that the school redistricting plan has been approved. He kept in touch with parents here and in Jarrettsville, and believes the school board did the best they could with our comments. Only 25 YBES students are moving to Jarrettsville ES.

Jim Riley noted that the Carrs Mill bridge work will take 6 months. Dave Williams said a meeting was planned to discuss alternative schedules or a temporary bridge. DPW is holding a meeting March 29 at 6:00 in the Fallston HS cafeteria to discuss.

New Business & Community Updates

The Community Development staff's plan for HUD is awaiting federal budget meeting results before the plan is discussed with the Community Councils. They may brief FCC in May.

Gene Ratych invited everyone to the GFA Annual Meeting. GFA's position on the Fallston part of the Master Plan is on their website. GFA proposes to keep things basically as they are, rural, and with a good quality of life.

Fallston VFC proudly announced the arrival of their new, \$700,000 rescue truck (pumper), and expect it to work at least 15-20 years like the last one.

From February 19-21, the mid-Atlantic region had a fire season like that in California. It set many records. Harford's VFCs worked round the clock helping Anne Arundel, Baltimore, and Baltimore County as well as Harford. Major problems were with woods fires, requiring multiple fire units responding throughout the region and involving hundreds of acres of woods. A small house fire even developed into a major woodland fire when it set nearby trees on fire.

Over 2 years ago, County Executive Craig ordered a study of Harford's fire departments. The report (from a contractor) arrived in late 2010 and was released in February 2011. (The 500-page report is online.) Mr. Craig founded a 17-member commission to evaluate and prioritize the 100+ recommendations in the study. No active fire company personnel are on the commission. Issues include: raising taxes to hire paid fire fighters, taxing insurance companies, and/or providing more money for volunteers.

Dave Williams has been appointed to Harford's Citizens Budget Advisory Group. Joe Woods is now on the libraries' Board of Directors.

The Fallston Community Area Plan will be discussed at the May FCC meeting. The current Master Plan is at <http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/PlanningZoning/Download/1278.pdf> (note: *The Fallston portion starts on page 179 of the Master Plan*).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Submitted by Morita Bruce and Dave Williams